CHAPTER XIII

AN EPISODE OF CHINA

YET, at this point, I will have something to say of the Chinese.

It was no more than a jest of circumstance that the *Nang-Li* made Papeete Harbour on the Fourteenth of July, but the fact heightens the colour of this story. For Tahiti keeps the Fourteenth with the enthusiasm of the boulevards, or maybe with more. At the time of the original Fourteenth, the inhabitants of Tahiti were only, it is true, in the first stages of their initiation into the delights of rum, the truths of Christianity and the embraces of white men ; and some generations had to pass, a small war or two to be fought, the squabbles of Catholic